

K with preceding tract

*114. b. 1.
8*

SCRIPTURE PROOF
FOR
PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY:

IN AN EIGHTH
CHARGE
Delivered to the
CLERGY
OF THE
ARCH-DEACONRY
OF
MIDDLESEX.

By R. ALTHAM, D. D. *Arch-Deacon*
of Middlesex.

L O N D O N:
Printed for G. STRAHAN, at the *Golden-Ball*,
against the *Royal-Exchange*. 1726.





SCRIPTURE PROOF
FOR
Provincial Authority.

Reverend Brethren,



A V I N G, in several Consultations, had Occasion to enquire into, *The Original State of Church Authority*; and having, as 'tis hop'd, upon sufficient Grounds, excluded the Pretence to an Universal Supremacy in any single Person; This has led us to an Assertion, That Provincial Authority, was the first External Settled Authority in the Church of Christ. The Evidence for this Assertion, within the Compass of the Sacred Canon, is what our last made an Entry upon, and we then went thro' the Historical Part of the *New Testament*: It remains now to proceed, and enquire,

What Evidence we meet with from the Apostolical Epistles.

2 Cor.
xi. 23.

St. Paul, who tells us of Himself, that he was in *Labours more abundant* than any one of the Apostles; and as he was peculiarly the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, converted more of the *Roman* Provinces than any of the others, as we have already seen from the Historical Part of the Canon of the *New Testament*, has, for that Reason, in Confirmation, or for the better Establishment of his numerous Conversions, left us a larger Collection of Epistles, than all the rest of the Apostles put together.

1st. The whole Collection of Epistles, attributed to him, are in Number Thirteen, and are generally written either to whole Provinces, as those to the *Romans* and *Galatians*; (for the *Romans* were not only the Inhabitants of the great City, but all the *Romans* within the suburbicary Region, *i. e. intra Centesimum Lapidem*, all the *Romans* who lived within the Compass of an Hundred Miles round about the great City, which was the peculiar Province of the *Præfectus Urbis*) And if Primitive and Apostolical Discipline, had been able to have kept its Force amongst us, it ought still to have confin'd
the

the Jurisdiction of the Bishop of that great City, within those Limits, whatever Primacy or Prerogative of Honour he may pretend to, as being Bishop of the Imperial See. The other *Galatia* was a known considerable Province in *Asia*, of which *Ancyra* was the Metropolis.

2dly. Or else, Secondly, *St. Paul's* Epistles, were written to the several Metropoles, or Mother Cities of Provinces, to be by them communicated to the rest of their Brethren within the said Province; as those to the *Ephesians*, *Corinthians*, *Philippians*, and *Thessalonians*; for *Ephesus* was the Metropolis of the Proconsular *Asia*, *Corinth* of *Achaia*, *Philippi* of one Part of *Macedonia*, *Thessalonica* of the other.

3dly. Or else, Thirdly, Such as were written to the Metropolitans themselves; as those to *Timothy* and *Titus*, with Instructions how to govern the Provinces under them. There is but one material Exception to this general Observation, and that is *St. Paul's* Epistle to the *Colossians*: For though *Colossæ* was a considerable City of *Phrygia*, yet it was not, but *Laodicea* then was, the Metropolis of that Country; whatever, therefore, might be the Occasion of directing it to
Colossæ,

Colossæ, for it is not expressed by the Apostle, yet it is very remarkable, that in that short Epistle, he four-times makes mention of *Laodicea*, with equal Care for them as for the *Colossians*, Chap. ii. ver. 1. and Chap. iv. ver. 15, 16. *Salute the Brethren which are in Laodicea*——
And when this Epistle is read amongst you, cause It to be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea. But if there may be room for Conjecture, 'tis very probable this Epistle was sent by *Onesimus*, when he brought St. Paul's Letter of Reconciliation to his Master *Philemon*, who then liv'd at *Colossæ*, and then this will account for the Objection both of this and that to *Philemon*, viz. Why this Epistle to the *Colossians*, and that to *Philemon*, were written, the one to a private City, the other to a private Person, when all the rest of St. Paul's Epistles seem to be written, either to whole Provinces, or to the Metropoles of Provinces, or to the Metropolitans: For the Date of both these private Epistles seems to agree with this Conjecture entirely, both of them being written from *Rome*, and brought by *Onesimus* at the
same

same Time; but that is not wholly to be relied on: that which more strengthens the Probability is, the Salutations (which are own'd to be *St. Paul's* own) are much the same in both the Epistles.

But besides this general Observation, that *St. Paul's* Epistles were, for the most part, directed either to whole Provinces, or to the Metropoles of Provinces, or to the Metropolitans, (except those to *Colossæ* and *Philemon*, which have been accounted for) there is a stronger Argument for the Provincial Authority may be drawn from them, in that sometimes the whole Epistle, sometimes the Matter of it, though the Epistle it self may be directed to a single City or Person, yet are order'd to be communicated to the whole Province.

Thus, to look back a little, the conciliary Epistle or Decree of the Apostles, met in Council at *Jerusalem*, was directed not only to the *Gentiles* of *Antioch*, where the Controversy first began, but also to those of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, Acts xv. 23. and was accordingly communicated by *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the *Antiochians*, ver. 30. and upon *Barnabas's* Departure for *Cyprus*, by *Paul* and *Silas*, to the
rest

rest of the Churches throughout *Syria* and *Cilicia*, Acts xvi. 4.

So also St. *Paul's* two Epistles to the *Corinthians*, are directed not only to the Church of God which is at *Corinth*, but to all Saints which in every Place call upon the Name of *Jesus Christ*, which the Interpreters confine to those within the Region or Province of *Achaia*, 1 *Ep. cap. i. ver. 2.* and indeed have good Reason for so doing, because St. *Paul* himself expressly does it in the Direction of his second Epistle to them, 2 *Cor. cap. i. ver. 1. Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our Brother, unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, with all the Saints that are in Achaia.*

Now this *Achaia*, when *Greece* had been subdu'd by the *Romans*, comprehended all *Attica*, even *Athens* it self; all *Peloponnesus*, *Lacedæmon*, *Argos*, the *Isthmus*, and *Achaia*, properly so call'd, or the Country of the *Achivi*; and indeed, all that the whole Republick of *Greece*, in its most flourishing Condition, had ever enjoy'd, except in *Asia*; for which Reason, when the *Romans* reduc'd it to the Form of a Province, they gave it the Honour of the Proconsular Dignity:

Tully

Tully tells us, (a) *Achaia was a Prætorian Province* (as indeed all the *Roman Provinces* were at first) *but by the Law of Clodius was made Proconsular.* And *Pliny*, under *Trajan*, writing to *Maximus*, just then made Proconsul of *Achaia*, says thus to him, (b) *Consider your self sent into the Province of Achaia, that true and very Greece, in which we are taught to believe both Human Letters, and Corn, were first invented.* And afterwards he says further, (c) *This is the Country which first gave us Laws, not upon Force, but at our own Request: 'Tis Athens you are going to, 'tis Lacedæmon you are to govern.* Thus far, therefore, and to thus many, *St. Paul* directed his *Epistles* to be communicated by the Church of *Corinth*; for that City was then the Metropolis and Seat of the *Roman Proconsul of Achaia*, and consequently made the Metropolis of *St. Paul's Conversions* in that Province.

(a) *Achaia cum esset Prætoria Lege Clodiâ Proconsularis est facta. Orat. in Pison.*

(b) *Cogita te missum in Provinciam Achaiam illam veram, & veram Græciam, in quâ primûm Humanitatis Literæ & Fruges, inventæ esse creduntur.*

(c) *Hanc esse Terram quæ nobis miserit Jura, quæ Leges non Invitis sed Petentibus dederit: Athenas esse quas adeas, Lacedæmonem esse quam Regas. Plin. Ep. Lib. 9. Ep. ult.*

B

We

We have yet a further Argument, for this Provincial Communication, from St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Colossians*, Chap. iv. ver. 16. *When this Epistle is read amongst you, cause it to be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea.* This Text has entertain'd the Learned with a double Difficulty; first, about the Critical Reading of it; 2dly. About the Interpretation of it; which, if we can clear, will shew us, 'tis a full and plain Evidence of what we produce it for, The Provincial Communication of St. *Paul's* Epistles.

The Learned *Grotius*, upon this Place, has positively asserted the true Reading of this Text to be without the Preposition [ἐκ] τὴν Λαοδικέας, of or belonging to *Laodicea*. I never willingly depart from this great Man's Judgment, and therefore, upon this Occasion, made a narrow Search amongst the Collectors of the various Readings in the *Greek* Text, and find the Preposition preserv'd in all of them: For I find but one various Reading upon this Text, and that is in the Sixteen *Spanish* Manuscripts collated by the Marquis *de Velez*, where the Construction indeed is alter'd, but the Preposition preserv'd, and the Sense too; for they

they read it, (a) *Let the Epistle from Laodicea be read by you* ; which intimates some Epistle they either had, or were to receive from *Laodicea*, which sufficiently vindicates our *English* Version in translating it, The Epistle from *Laodicea* ; for if all the Manuscripts, notwithstanding their various Reading, do still preserve the Preposition [ἐκ] there is no room for the Conjectures of the Learned *Grotius*.

But then of what Epistle these Words are to be interpreted, remains still a Doubt, because in all the Canonical Epistles of *St. Paul*, we do not find one, which was ever own'd by the Catholick Church to be directed to the *Laodiceans* ; *Marcion* indeed, that early Heretick, (for he flourish'd in the beginning of the third, if not in the latter End of the second Century) in his Book which he call'd *Apostolicon* (a Rhapsody compos'd by him chiefly from *St. Paul's* Epistles, but those miserably confounded, mutilated, and interpolated) ; this Heretick, I say, in order to support his own wretched heretical Opinions, has, in that Book, quoted an Epistle of *St Paul's* to the *Laodiceans*.

(a) Ἡ ἐκ Λαοδικείας ὑμῖν ἀναγινώσκειται.

The Book itself has indeed been long lost, and the Loss not very deplorable ; but *Tertullian*, who was Contemporary with him, in his fifth Book against *Marcion*, for so many he wrote, to give him a thorough Confutation, has, so early as that, taken Notice of, and discover'd the Fallacy, or rather the Blunder of the Heretick ; for in the eleventh Chapter of that Book, he tells us, (a) *As to the other Epistle, which we have written to the Ephesians, but the Hereticks to the Laodiceans.* And again, chap. xvii. (b) *The true Church reckons that Epistle sent to the Ephesians, not the Laodiceans, yet Marcion was pleas'd to interpolate the Title, to shew himself by that a diligent Critick ; But we need not concern ourselves about Titles, for when the Apostle writes to some, he writes to all.* So that *Tertullian* seems to be of Opinion, that the Epistle which the *Laodiceans* had, was that which Saint

(a) De aliâ Epistolâ quam nos ad Ephesios præscriptam habemus Hæretici vero ad Laodiceños. Tertull. adv. Marc. Lib. V. Cap. 11.

(b) Ecclesiæ quidem veritate, Epistolam istam ad Ephesios habemus emissam, non ad Laodiceños, sed Marcion ei titulum aliquando interpolare gessit, quasi & in isto diligentissimus explorator ; nihil autem de titulis interest, cum ad omnes Apostolus scripserit dum ad quosdam. Ibid. Cap. 17.

Paul directed to the *Ephesians*, and may easily appear to have been so, from this Account following.

Ephesus, at the Time when *St. Paul* wrote his Epistle to them, was the Metropolis of the whole Proconsular *Asia*, and at that Time, too, *Phrygia Minor* was a Part of that Proconsular Province : For when the last *Attalus*, by Will, bequeathed to the *Romans* the whole *Pergamian* Kingdom, which then contained both the *Phrygia's*, and several other Maritime and some Inland Provinces of the *Minor Asia* ; *Strabo* tells us, they declared the Whole to be one Province, (a) Calling it *Asia* after the Name of the Continent. So that at that Time, *Phrygia Minor*, was look'd upon, or taken for no more than a Diocese, or smaller District within a larger Provincial Jurisdiction.

For so Antient is that Word [*Διοίκησις*] in the self-same Sense and Signification we now use it ; nay, we find it older than Christianity itself ; for when the Province of *Cilicia* was given to *Tully* with Proconsular Dignity (who was the only one I can ever find so had it) ; he tells

(a) Οἱ δὲ Ἐπαρχὴν ἀπέδειξαν τὴν χώραν, Ἀσίαν προσαγορεύοντες, ὁμώνυμον τῇ Ἠπείρῳ. *Strabo Lib. XIII. p. 429.*

us, in a Letter to *Servilius*, [*Isauricus* I suppose] he had three *Asiatick* Dioceses added to his small Province; His Words are these, (a) *Of all my Province of Cilicia, to which you know there were three Asiatick Dioceses added, I have not had more familiar Converse with any one than with Andro the Son of Artemon of Laodicea, he was not only my Host, whilst in that City, but also very agreeable to my Way and Manner of Life.* And so recommends him to *Servilius's* Favour. This shews that *Laodicea* was the Metropolis, or chief City of one of the *Asiatick* Districts or Dioceses, and therefore what was sent to *Ephesus* the Prime Metropolis with Order to be communicated to the whole Proconsular *Asia*; must by them be first sent to the *Laodiceans*, and by the *Laodiceans* to other Cities of their Diocese of *Phrygia Minor*, of which *Colossæ* was one; which may be sufficient to account for *Tertullian's* Supposition, that this Epistle from *Laodicea*, was that

(a) Ex provinciâ meâ Ciliciensi, cui scis *Τῆς Διοκῆσεως* Asiaticas attributas fuisse nullo sum familiaris usus quam Androne Artemonis filio Laodicensi, eumque habui in eâ civitate cum hospitem, tum vehementer ad meâ vitæ rationem & consuetudinem accomodatam. Tull. Ep. ad Fam. Lib. XIII. Ep. 67.

which

which St. *Paul* had directed to the *Ephe-
sians*.

But this is further confirmed to us by *Epiphanius*, for he, in his forty-second Heresy, concerning the *Marcionites*, has preserv'd for us some Fragments of *Marcion's Apostolicon*, in one of which is contained a Citation of *Marcion's*, from Saint *Paul's* Epistle, as he call'd it, to the *Laodiceans*; the Words of which Citation are at this day read in St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Ephe-
sians*: To cover this Mistake or Blunder of their Leader, the Disciples or Followers of *Marcion*, forg'd an Epistle, in St. *Paul's* Name, to the *Laodiceans*, which we find was extant in St. *Jerome's* time, but such an one as he at the same time tells us was exploded by every one: Nay, there is still extant in the German Edition of *Elias Hutter's Polyglotte Testament*, such an Epistle, whether the same that was extant in St. *Jerome's* time, is not certain, but such an one as wants no more than once Reading over, to convince it of the Forgery. And for these Reasons *Tertullian's* Opinion has generally obtain'd in the Catholick Church; that it was the Epistle to the *Ephe-
sians*, which was communicated to the *Laodiceans*, as being a Part of the Proconsular
Asia,

De Scrip.
Eccl.
verb.
Paulus.

Asia, and was by them to be communicated to all the Churches of their District or Diocese in the *Lesser Phrygia*.

But to conceal nothing, there are some Interpreters of Great Name and Authority, who have gone another way in the Interpretation of this Text; *St. Chrysostom*, for Instance, upon the Place, takes it for an Epistle wrote by the *Laodiceans* to *St. Paul*; and is in this followed by *Oecumenius*, and other *Greek* Commentators, who generally do no more, than either implicitly transcribe or abridge him; *St. Paul* indeed does often mention Epistles wrote to him by his Converts, but they are usually such as do complain of some Irregularities, which want his further Directions to cure and correct them; and therefore we find none of them receiv'd into the Canon of Scripture; nor would this, if it had been such, been ever commanded by *St. Paul* to be read publickly in the Church of *Colossæ*, because that, from so great an Apostle, would have been a sufficient Canonization of it.

And therefore, we find this Opinion dropp'd even by the Admirers of *St. Chrysostom*; for *Theophylact*, who closely follows him in all his other Commentaries, deserts him here, and takes this Epistle from
Laodicea,

Laodicea, to be *St. Paul's* First Epistle to *Timothy* ; this Opinion shews, that in *Theophylact's* Time, which was about the middle of the Eleventh Century, *St. Chrysostom's* Notion was not so well receiv'd. But, however, were even this Notion of *Theophylact's* true, it would still answer the Design of our Evidence ; for thus in *Tertullian's* Notion, the Communication was made by the Metropolitan Church of *Ephesus* : In *Theophylact's* Notion, it was made by the Metropolitan Bishop of *Ephesus*, and so either way must be a Provincial Communication.

But *Theophylact's* Opinion seems to have been too modern, to outweigh the early and contemporary Evidence of *Tertullian*, and therefore *Grotius*, in his Preface to his Commentary upon the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, to compose all, gives us another conjectural Interpretation, without any Authority to support it ; *i. e.* He supposes *St. Paul* to have actually wrote an Epistle to the *Laodiceans* ; (a) Which was no more than a Transcript of that to the *Ephesians*, as if *St. Paul*, under such a Multitude of Affairs he was then engag'd in, and the Pressure of his Bonds too, could be at Leisure to trans-

(a) Eodem tenore. Grot. Præf. Com. in Ephes.
C crite

cribe his own Epistle ; and, therefore, I shall conclude this critical Dissertation with what our Learned Dr. *Hammond* seems more inclinable to, *viz.* That it was the Epistle to the *Ephesians* communicated by them to the *Laodiceans*, and by those to be communicated to the other Churches of *Phrygia*, which is more agreeable to those Circumstances of *S. Paul*, and to the Custom of that Time.

Our next Evidence for Provincial Authority from *St. Paul's* Epistles, is that of his Epistle to *Titus*, cap. i. ver. 5. (a) *For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in Order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.*

Crete, where *Titus* was appointed to this Office by *St. Paul*, is a noble Island, lying in the *Mediterranean* Sea, between the *Aegean* and *Cyrenaick*, not far from the Head of the *Morea*, or *Peloponnesus* ; which has been famous from the earliest Dates of History, for the Number and Populoufness of its Cities ; *Homer*, in his Catalogue, calls it, (b) *An Island of an hundred Cities.*

(a) ἵνα τὰ Λαίπωντα διορθώσῃ, καὶ κηλεύσῃ καὶ Πόλιν Πρεσβυτέρους.

(b) Οἱ δ' Ἄλλοι Κρήνην Ἐξήλομπολιν ἀμφενέμοντο, *Iliad*. B. 649.

Virgil (a) also tells us of them.

And *Strabo*, who wrote in *Augustus's* Time, tells us, (b) *There were indeed many Cities in Crete, but three of them the Chief, viz. Gnosſus, Gortyna, and Cydonia.* So that here was Room enough for Provincial Authority where there were ſo many Cities; for that is uſually defined by twelve; and in modern Provinces we often find them content with fewer.

It is not much material to our preſent Queſtion, when the Date of this Con- verſion ſhould be fix'd, or what Time it was *St. Paul* left *Titus* in *Crete* for the Eſtabliſhment of this Authority, ſince 'tis plain from the Text itſelf, *St. Paul* did leave him there for that End.

The eminent *Roman* Annaliſt, and our learned *Dr. Hammond* ſeems to agree with him in it, fixes it about *A. D.* 54. at the Time when *St. Paul* went from *Macedonia* into *Greece*, which the learned Cardinal ſuppoſes, he did not do by Land, but made his Paſſage by the *Ægean* Sea, and ſo took the Iſland of *Crete*

(a) Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima Regna. *Æn.* 3. 106.

(b) Πόλεις δ' εἰσιν ἐν τῇ Κρήνῃ, πλήντες μὲν, Μέγισται δὲ καὶ ὀψιφανέσταται τρεῖς, Γνωσσοῦς, Γόρτυνα, Κυδωνία. *Strab.* l. x. p. 328.

in his way ; but 'tis no small Prejudice to this Hypothesis (for such it is, and no more) that St. *Luke's* History is wholly silent concerning it, which so diligent an Observer of St. *Paul's* Travels as St. *Luke* was, could hardly possibly have been, if it had happen'd within the Compass of his Observation, as that Year plainly did.

And therefore in this case I am more inclinable to follow a more accurate Annalist, our very learned Bishop *Pearson*, who in his digesting his *Annales Paulini*, has, I dare venture to say, out-done the Diligence and Exactness of all who have gone before him in that Argument : Now he, because St. *Luke* is wholly silent in that Matter, fixes it to that *Quinquennium*, which all Writers allow St. *Paul*, between his first Deliverance from his Bonds in *Rome*, and his last Imprisonment there ; and more particularly to that Time when he took his Journey into *Spain*, which he had promis'd in his Epistle to the *Romans* ; for from thence he might easily sail to *Crete*, and so back into *Asia*, where 'tis plain he was, during some part of that *Quinquennium* ; and for this our learned and more accurate Annalist fixes the 63d, or Beginning of the 64th Year of Christ, which was the 10th of *Nero*.

But

But this does not so much concern the Provincial Authority, the Evidence for which from this Text, must arise from an accurate Explication of those Terms, in which St. *Paul* delivers this Command to *Titus*, καλασθῆναι Κατὰ Πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους. For the better understanding of which, we must consider, the Provincial Jurisdiction of the *Roman* Magistrate was generally so large, that in Aid and Assistance of it, and for the more expeditious Dispensation of Justice amongst the People, they usually divided it into smaller Districts or Administrations (as has been before hinted) which they called *Diœceses*, for, that indeed is the original Import of the Word Διοίκησις, which, in its primitive Institution, signifies no more than Administration in general.

These Districts or Administrations were commonly modell'd by a City and its Territory or Dependency; for every *Roman* City, and so had the *Greeks* before them, whether it was Colony, Free City, Social Kingdom, or Præfecture, had a Portion of the Country round about it always assign'd for its Limits, the Inhabitants of which were oblig'd to have Resort to the chief City for Justice in all their Controversies: This is what the learned Antiquary
Rosinus,

Rosinus has remark'd, (a) *The Servitude of Cities lay chiefly in this, that they should obey the Roman Laws and Magistrates, for which Reason in every Province there were several Diœceses, or several Places for Meetings or Conventions either for Traffick, or for Justice, (for Forum signifies both) and these had their several Districts or Territories appointed them, which were to repair thither to demand Justice from the Roman Magistrate.*

This may be further cleared by a few Instances, amongst many that might be produc'd, from *Tully*, in order to give us a sufficient Foundation for explaining *St. Paul's Κατὰ Πόλιν*, according to this known Method of the Civil Provincial Jurisdiction of the *Romans*: It might indeed be cleared from many other *Roman Writers*, of the first and best Authority, but I chuse rather to make use of *Tully*, because he is, by all, acknowledged to be sufficiently well vers'd in the Laws of

(a) *Servitus autem quam dixi civitatum, tota in eo posita fuit, ut legibus & magistratibus Romanis obtemperarent, quâ de causâ in singulis Provinciis, diversæ Diœceses, sive diversi Conventus, ac diversâ fora constituebantur; eisq; suæ cuique Civitates attribuebantur, quæ eo, juris à magistratu Romano poscendi causâ, convenirent. Rosin. Lib. X. cap. 22.*

his own Country, and also to have been, as far as his Courage would allow him, a true Friend to the Cause of Liberty : and liv'd and wrote at such a Time, when Liberty was upon the Decline, and Dominion gaining the Ascendant.

Now the Instances from him, to illustrate what we are about, are these : In his 13th Book, *Ep. ad Fan. Ep. 53.* he recommends his Friend *Genucilius Curvus*, to *Thermus*, who was then *Proprætor* of the Province ; desiring that he would support and protect his Affairs in *Hellepont*, particularly that Right and Title, the City of *Parium* [*Pariana Civitas*] had given him to some Lands in their Territory ; and that he would not suffer him to be harrafs'd with Appeals ; but if he happen'd to have any Controversy with any of the *Hellepontiac* District, he prays him, (a) *That he would send it back to be determined by the Jurisdiction of that Diocese.*

Another Instance we have of his own Management in his own Province of *Cilicia* : In a Letter to *Cato*, he tells him, when he came into his Province, the Day before the Calends of *August*, and by

(a) Ut in illam Διοίκησιν rejiciat. Tull. Lib. XIII. Ep. ad Fan. Ep. 53.

reason of the advanc'd Season was to hasten to the Army, he staid but two Days at *Laodicea*, four at *Apamea*, three at *Synnada*, and as many at *Philomelium*; (a) *In which Places, when he had held great Conventions, he freed many Cities from heavy Tributes, grievous Usuries, and burthensome Debts*: So quick a dispatch he made of Justice in so short a Time. He

Ad. Fam. repeats the same thing to *Appius Pulcher*,
L. 3. Ep. and there tells him, Those were the Dio-
8. ceses or Districts he had in *Asia*, *Cis Taurum*, on this Side the Mountain *Taurus*, for *Cilicia* was beyond the *Taurus*: And again, he repeats it to his Friend *Atticus*, where he tells him farther: (b) *But the harassed Cities were eased, because they were at no Expence, either for him, his Legates, Quæstors, or any Body*. For these particular Dioceses, or Jurisdictions, were sometimes administred by the Proconsul or Prator himself, sometimes by the Legates, sometimes by the Quæstors,

(a) Quibus in Oppidis, *says he*, cum Magni Conventus fuissent, multas Civitates Acerbissimis Tributis & Gravissimis Usuris, & Falso Ære Aliquo Liberavi. Tull. Ep. ad Fam. Lib. 15. Ep. 4.

(b) Levantur tamen miseræ Civitates, quod nullus sit sumptus in nos, neq; in Legatos, neq; in Quæstorem, neq; in quemquam. Tull. Ep. ad Att. 1. 5. Ep. 16.

some-

sometimes by a special Præfect, sent by the Proconsul or Prætor.

And that *Crete* it self, of which we are now treating, was thus govern'd at this Time; we have an Authentick Evidence from *Strabo*, who liv'd so near *Tully*, as to write his Book in the Reign of *Augustus*; for he having given us a large Account of the History and Polity of the antient *Cretans*, concludes his Account with these Words, (a) *They had not much of those ancient Laws and Constitutions left*: But were govern'd, in his Time, by the *Roman* Constitutions, even as it happen'd in other Provinces.

From these authentick Evidences then, thus arising from the Nature of the Thing, and the History of the Time, we plainly see both the Method and the Model of the Civil Provincial Authority at that Time; and therefore, if the Principles laid down are strong enough to infer it, have Reason to conclude, that when *St. Paul* commands *Titus* (b) *To Ordain Elders in every City*, he bids him establish

(a) Οὐ Πόλλὰ δὲ Διαμένει τέτων τῶν Νομίμων, Ἀλλὰ τοῖς Ῥωμαίων Διατάγμασι τὰ πλεῖστα Διοικεῖται, καθάπερ καὶ ἐν ταῖς Ἄλλαις ἑπαρχίαις συμβαίνει. *Strabo*, Lib. 10. p. 333.

(b) Καταστήσαι πρεσβύτερος κατὰ Πόλιν.

Diocesan Episcopacy in the Provincial Method; which may, I hope, be sufficient to clear us from that troublesome Logomachy, arising from the Ambiguity of the Word *Presbyter* in the *New Testament*; for though it may sometimes signify a plain Presbyter, oftner does a Bishop, nay, sometimes signifies even an Apostle himself; yet thus, 'tis evident, it must here mean a Diocesan Bishop, settled in the Provincial Method.

This may be further confirm'd to us, by finding, in plain Fact, that it really was so; for *Eusebius*, very early, about
 H. E. lib. 4. c. 23. the Middle of the Second Century, under *M. Aurelius Antoninus*, giving an Account of some Catholick Epistles, written about that Time to several Churches, by *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, mentions one, (a) *To the Church of Gortyna, together with the other Churches throughout Crete*. In which he commends *Philip* Bishop of *Gortyna*, which was the Metropolis, and, at the same time, shews he had several Diocesans in the Island besides; for, even by the same Hand, we find another Letter directed to the Church of *Gnossus*, a known and famous City of *Crete*, in

(a) Τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ παροικήσῃ Γόρτυναν ἅμα ταῖς λοιπαῖς κατὰ Κρήτην παροικίαις.

which

which he mentions *Pinytus* their Bishop : *In which he commends Pinytus the Bishop of the Diocese.* Now this plainly shews us, there were several Παροικίας at that Time in *Crete* ; and that Word Παροικία, throughout the whole History of *Eusebius*, constantly signifies the Diocesan Episcopate ; which is, I think, as plain Evidence as Fact can give us, that *Crete* was then settled under Diocesan Episcopacy in the Provincial Method. The Antient *Notitiæ* do further shew this, as likewise the Subscriptions to the Council of *Ephesus* and *Chalcedon* ; and the Synodical Epistle of the *Cretans* to *Leo* the Emperor : And lastly, the latest Editor, *Carolus à Sancto Paulo*, reckons Ten Diocesans, under the Metropolitan of *Gortyna*.

Thus far *St. Paul's* Epistles have led us into an Enquiry after the Settlement of Provincial Authority, within the Canon of the *New Testament* ; There remain still two more considerable Evidences of the same, viz. *St. Peter's* two Epistles, and those of *St. John* to the Seven Churches of *Asia* ; but in these we may be the more brief, because in Opening the

(c) Ἐν ἡ Πίνυτον τῆς Παροικίας Ἐπίσκοπον παρακαλεῖ. Euseb. Ibid.

Evidence from *St. Paul's* Epistles, we have had so large Occasion to explain the Nature of that Civil Provincial Authority, by which the *Romans* then govern'd the World.

St. *Peter* inscribes both his Epistles to the Strangers scatter'd throughout *Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*; for though the Enumeration of the Provinces be not repeated in the Inscription of the Second Epistle, yet he tells them, Chap. iii.
ver. 1. *This Second Epistle, Beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance*: Which plainly intimates, this second was written to the same Persons the former was: The Original is *Εκλεκτοῖς παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς Πόντε, &c.* which shews, Saint *Peter* to own himself the Apostle of the Circumcision, and that these two Epistles were directed only to the convert *Jews* of the Dispersion throughout those Provinces.

Now these Provinces had been some Time, all, or most of them, the Dominion of the Great *Mithridates*, that sturdy Enemy of the *Romans*; but upon his Reduction, which was finished by *Julius Caesar* after *Pompey's* Death in *Egypt*, they were, by his Successor *Augustus*, settled

settled in the Form of *Roman* Provinces; some of them as proper Provinces, some as Tetrarchies, such was sometimes *Galatia*; some as social Kingdoms, such was, during the Life of *Nicomedes*, *Bithynia*; but when he, by his last Will and Testament, left it as a Legacy to the *Romans*, as *Attalus* did *Asia*, we find *Pliny* the younger, under *Trajan*, sent Proconsul of it, as a Province.

These Provinces, I say, thus fix'd under the *Romans*, had their several Metropoles, and under them, several Dioceses, or inferior Districts, as has been above describ'd, which the latest Editor of the Ecclesiastick *Notitia*, before-mention'd, thus reckons:

Pontus, call'd *Diospontus*, or *Helenspontus*, had for its Metropolis *Amasea*, and Fifteen Dioceses under it.

Galatia had for its Metropolis *Ancyra*, and Sixteen Dioceses under it, if that call'd *Pontus Polemoniacus* be reckon'd to it, as it usually is.

Cappadocia had for its Metropolis *Cæsarea*, and Sixteen Dioceses under it.

Asia had for its Metropolis *Ephesus*, and a large Number of Dioceses, which will be accounted for under St. *John's* Evidence.

Bithynia

Bithynia had for its Metropolis *Nicomedia*, and Seventeen Dioceses under it; so that whatever Title *St. Peter* might have, either to the Patriarchate of *Antioch*, or the pretended universal Vicarship at *Rome*, 'tis plain, from Scripture, he did establish a large Provincial Jurisdiction in these noted Provinces of *Asia Minor*.

It remains only, to consider those Epistles written by *St. John* to the Seven Churches of *Asia*; Now 'tis plain they were written by him, during the Time
 Rev. c. 1. Of his Exile in the Isle of *Patmos*, which
 v. 9. was about the Fifteenth Year of *Domitian*,
A. D. 95. and therefore, probably, after
St. Timothy's Remove by Death: But how-
 H.E. 1. 3. ever that was, *Eusebius* tells us, *Asia* was
 c. 1. the Province which happened to *St. John*; and it is as plain too, that *St. Paul* fix'd *Timothy*, the first Bishop of *Ephesus*: Supposing therefore they might live together, as for some Part of their Life they necessarily must do, yet *St. John* might act by the unlimited Authority of an Apostle; *Timothy*, under the limited Authority of a fixed Bishop.

The *Asia* here mention'd, since the Learned Dissertation by Primate *Usher*, is by all agreed to mean the Provincial
 or

or Proconsular *Asia*: for *Asia* had three different Significations; in the largest Sense it signify'd the Third Part of the then known World, in Contradistinction to *Europe*, and *Africa*; in a more contracted Sense, it signify'd only that Part of the Great Continent which was known by the Name of *Asia Minor*; and in the strictest and narrowest Sense, it signify'd no more than the Provincial or Proconsular *Asia*: Now this Provincial *Asia*, as has been before remark'd, contain'd no more of *Asia Minor*, than what had belong'd to the *Pergamenian* Kingdom, and was left by *Attalus* as a Legacy to the *Romans*.

Accordingly, we find all the Seven Churches, to whom these Epistles of Saint *John* were inscrib'd, within this Compass; *Ephesus* was the Metropolis; *Smyrna* was a considerable City in *Ionian*; *Pergamus* was the chief City of *Troas*; *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, and *Philadelphia*, were in *Lydia*, as it is largely taken, and comprehends *Mysia*, and *Caria*, but, strictly speaking, *Sardis* was the chief City of *Lydia*, properly so call'd: *Thyatira* of *Mysia*, and *Philadelphia* (built by *Attalus Philadelphus*) of *Caria*; and *Laodicea*, as we have before seen, was the chief

chief City of *Phrygia Pacatiana*: Now, all these Regions, or Countries, as they had been Parts of the *Pergamenian* Kingdom, so were they now reckon'd as so many Dioceses, Districts, or Administrations, within the Provincial or Proconsular Jurisdiction.

And thus we find, even before the Death of *St. John*, though 'tis true he was the longest-liv'd-Apostle, a proper Provincial Jurisdiction settled; a Metropolitan with so many Diocesans under him; and, if we look into the ancient *Notitia*, and Subscriptions; about the Fourth or Fifth Century, we shall find the Number increased, in that Proconsular Province, to above an Hundred; which may, I hope, be sufficient to make good our Assertion, That Provincial Authority was the First External Settled Authority in the Church of Christ. And further, if this Scripture Evidence can hold its Ground, it will, I hope, be no longer look'd upon as a bold Assertion to say, not only that Episcopacy, But even that Provincial Episcopacy, is *Jure Divino Apostolico*.



F I N I S.

3
7
2
0
1
3
0
c
s
-
-
s
s
r
r
-
I
r
s
e
is
l,
n
at
Q

